Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

The **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is a not-for-profit database created in 2009-2011 to assist scholars, researchers, educators and students to discover, use, and build upon the Charlotte Mason Collection of archives, journals and books housed in the Armitt Library & Museum (UK). To learn more about this database or to search the digital collection, go to The Charlotte Mason Digital Collection.

Your use of images from the **Charlotte Mason Digital Collection** is subject to a License. To publish images for commercial purposes, a license fee must be submitted and permission received prior to publication. To publish or present images for non-profit purposes, the owner, Redeemer University College, must be notified at cmdc@redeemer.ca and submission of a copy of the context in which it was used also must be submitted to the owner at cmdc@redeemer.ca. Credit lines, as specified in the License, must accompany both the commercial and non-profit use of each image.

Unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal nor may you make multiple copies of any of the digital images. Higher resolution images are available. [Low resolution (150 dpi), single copy printing is permitted: High resolution images for publication can be purchased. Please contact Redeemer University College in writing as specified in the License to request high resolution images.

While the document originals are housed in the Armitt Library & Museum, Redeemer University College owns the rights to the Digital Images (in jpg/pdf format) of the original archival documents and artifacts. The original Digital Images and database metadata are owned and maintained by Redeemer University College. Multiple images are bound together in PDF Packages. Click here to download the latest version of Adobe Reader for better viewing. In the PDF, click an image thumbnail to view it.

This project was made possible through collaboration among the Armitt Library & Museum (Ambleside, UK), Redeemer University College (Ancaster, Canada) and the University of Cumbria (UK) and with the financial assistance of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Need help? If you do **not** see a side-bar with image thumbnails:
Some of the PDF packages are large and will take some time to download. A very large PDF package may open more successfully if you download it first to your desktop. (From inside the database record, right-click on the link to the PDF package and save the link to your desktop.) Once it's on your desktop, you can open it up with a recent version of Adobe Reader.

If you have a Macintosh with Safari, the default program to open PDFs is Preview, which does not open the PDF packets. Mac users need to download Adobe Reader. If this cover page appears without a list of PDF files (either at the side or bottom of the screen), look for a paper clip or a menu option to view attachments. If you click that, you should see a list of the pages in the PDF package.

Viewing files with Linux: This works with the default PDF viewer that comes pre-installed with Ubuntu. While viewing this cover page in the PDF viewer, click "View" on the top toolbar, and check the box that says "Side Panel". That will bring up the side panel. The side panel will show only this cover page. Click the 'arrow' at the top of the side panel, and it will give you the option to view "attachments." If you click that, you should see a list of PDF files, which are the pages in the PDF package.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada
Canada

THE TEACHING OF HISTORY.

By H. A. Nesbitt, M.A.

(Continued from page 246.)

The History of England has some great advantages as compared with that of Germany, for instance, it is more easily grasped as being less desultory. The History of Germany is the history of various rulers and their dealings with one another, and what they have done for their people, or left undone; that of England is the story of what the people have done for themselves. Again, the History of France is cleft by the mighty chasm of the Revolution. There is less connection between modern France and the France of a century and a half ago than between our England and the England of the Plantagenets. Laws or customs existing before the revolution have little more than an antiquarian interest, whereas in England a law in the reign of Edward I. that has not been repealed may be cited in a court of justice. No nation is so conservative of old forms as we are. When Wellington was thanked by Parliament they took care to follow all the forms used in the case of Marlborough. When there was a question as to the right of the nation to change the succession in extreme cases, it was not argued from the point of view of the Rights of Man. The question was asked: What did our ancestors do? The rolls of Parliament applying to Edward II. were examined when the Parliament deposed him in favour of his son. In the case of Richard II. the throne had been declared vacant; but then this proceeding had been formally annulled by the Parliament of Edward IV. Then it was found that the act of Edward IV. had been repealed by the first Parliament of Henry VII.

And yet if most conservative our nation is surely the most liberal. No nation has shown such skill and judgment in asserting or such tenacity in obtaining its liberties; and it is a remarkable fact that though each step has been gained by a struggle, the whole nation has contentedly acquiesced when it has been gained. Since the first great struggle between

the Whigs and Tories, the Exclusion Bill, in which the Whigs were wrong at any rate in the means proposed, every great question is now looked upon from a Whig stand-point. The Revolution, which though brought about by Whigs and Tories, could only be defended on Whig principles, The Toleration Act, The Hanoverian Succession, The Resistance to the Coercion of America, the Resistance to the War against the French Republic, Catholic Emancipation, The Reform of Parliament, Free Trade, National Education, Vote by Ballot, all the great measures passed, if not by the Whigs, in accordance with their principles and in opposition to the principles of the Tories, have been so far accepted by the nation that both parties claim the merit of them. Who would desire to undo any one of them now? How far History will repeat itself in the case of Irish Home Rule is a question for the future, but up to 1880 we may say that History is Whig. As a training in politics, whether to an Englishman, a Frenchman, or a German, no history is so instructive as our own, unless perhaps that of Greece. In the History of Greece the advantages and disadvantages of Monarchy, Oligarchy, Democracy, can be studied as in no other. The self-respect and dignity of the aristocratic Spartan—his truthfulness and devoted courage on the one hand, with his selfish cruelty towards inferiors and jealousy of unusual ability among his equals. The culture and love of justice, the toleration of difference of opinion of the Athenian, brought up as he was to think, to speak, and to act, with his tendency to be swayed by sudden impulse and to be carried away by over-great admiration of and subservience to some one man, advantageous when the man was a Pericles, disastrous when he was a Nicias or an Alcibiades, give us, under the guidance of Thucydides, an opportunity such as we get nowhere else of studying forms of government in their simplest and therefore most instructive aspect. Of course there are many other lessons of a practical view. The power of a standing army, as shown first by the excellence of the Spartans, then by their defeat by the mercenaries of Iphicrates, and the sacred band of the Thebans, with the overthrow of both by the regularly paid and drilled soldiers of Philip. The danger to small states of disunion in the presence of a powerful neighbour, &c., &c.

The History of Rome, while perhaps even more valuable in its economic and social side is much more difficult for children, at any rate after the time of the Second Punic War, but it is necessary for the due understanding of modern times. Ancient History is the story of the rise of Rome, and of the nations which one by one fell into its lap; Modern History the story of what became of its fragments, with the infusion of the new Teutonic blood. There are long periods of history which can be passed over in rapid review, but it is very good to have a general idea even of the Dark Ages. Many people would find it difficult to mention say one event in each of the nineteen centuries of our era. And yet the events are so linked together that for the full understanding of even the present time we want to bear the whole chain in view. A historian once, when asked where Modern History began, replied "With the Call of Abraham." And now when we can learn so much of the Egyptian civilisation and see how far the Israelites were influenced by that, and how much of that influence has descended to us, we can hardly put such a limit even as that.

Lastly, are we to follow Buckle's view that History is the story of irresistible currents, or Carlyle's, that it is the story of the great men? If we are to interest children I have no doubt that it is the latter view we must keep before us. What a different world it might have been had Miltiades, Pericles, Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, Alfred, William of Normandy, Gregory VII., Otto the First, Godfrey of Bouillon, Luther, Elizabeth, Cromwell, William III., Frederick II., Clive, Napoleon, Nelson, and Wellington been other than they were.

A small group—there were ten of them—of officers stood on the heights looking down on the little encampment of 10000 men in the village below and on the mighty host from all the nations under heaven that crowded the plain extending between the village of Marathon and the sea. Were they to fight at once or await the coming of the Spartans to their aid? Miltiades urged action. He had personal knowledge of the Greek and Persian qualities, and believed that though the odds were ten to one, there was a fair chance of victory. The ten were equally divided, five and five, but they were joined by the War Minister, Callimachus, and he, after hearing the

arguments, decided for battle. Had Callimachus voted for delay, what would have become of Greek civilisation, for there was no other force left that could have coped with the Persians.

Again, a small army of Greeks, some 14000 in number, had penetrated the heart of Asia in support of a claimant for the throne of Persia. In spite of a victory, the claimant, Cyrus the younger, had fallen. The generals in command of the Greeks had been invited to a colloquy and murdered. That night no one had the heart to cook his supper. Each man lay down and bemoaned the home and friends he had no chance of seeing again. But there was a young Athenian in camp who had come to see something of war as a volunteer, and he asked himself why he should leave it to others to make an effort. He, Xenophon, the Athenian, had learned to think, to speak, and to act. He went to the remaining captains, urged them to summon a meeting, encouraged the army, got them to choose new leaders of whom he was one, and led them over pathless mountains, fighting their way step by step, till the joyous day when from the top of a hill they could see their friend the sea, and broke out into glad shouts: Thalatta! Thalatta! the sea! the sea! Had Xenophon not been there, had the little army perished, the great lesson that Greeks could conquer Asiatics against any odds would not have been learned. Alexander's Conquest, with all that it entailed, might never have taken place.

Again, a poor pilgrim, struck with sorrow at the sufferings inflicted on his brethren by the Turks, got permission from the Pope to preach a Holy War. But for Peter the Hermit, the Crusades, the key-note of the Middle Ages, might never have taken place.

Again, a little army, some 900 Europeans and 1500 Sepoys, stood on the banks of a river: on the other side lay a mighty army, more than twenty to one. A council of war had decided on retreat. Clive had voted with the majority, but walking about under some trees he formed a new resolution, and gave orders to cross the river. The next day Plassy was won. Had Clive retreated, France and not England might now be in possession of India.

And it is not only the virtues, but the vices and failings of prominent men that have affected the course of History. If John had been upright and pure where would have been

Magna Charta? If James I. had not been a driveller and a coward; if he had played the part of Gustav Adolf, if he had led armies to Bohemia and Bavaria, if he had hung up the banners of conquered nations in St. Paul's, where, with his theories of Divine right, would have been English liberty? If George III. had been less obstinate and narrow-minded America might still have been British.

And English History leads us especially to the study of Biography. Since Walpole History has generally taken the form of a duel between two leaders: Walpole and Pulteney—Carteret and Pitt—Pitt and Murray—Fox and North—Fox and Pitt—Canning and Peel—Peel and Russell—Palmerston and Disraeli—Disraeli and Gladstone—Gladstone and Salisbury. Of course there is a danger in History as in politics, that the charm of an individual may induce us to forget that he was on the wrong side. Many schoolgirls especially are apt to think of the Civil War as a war between Charles and Cromwell, and to side with the more attractive personality of Charles, forgetting that it was the liberty of England that was at stake, and that had Charles been successful English liberty would have perished as French liberty had perished under Richelieu. But for all that, if you want pupils to love history, you must above all interest them in individuals.

I find it very useful to illustrate the lessons by means of prints, especially portraits of the great men I am talking about. The coarse good sense of Walpole, the soaring eloquence of Chatham, the inanity of Newcastle, the bonhommie of Fox, the calm statesmanship of Grey, the self-respect of Peel, the gay temper of Palmerston, the isolated sarcasm of Disraeli, the eager personality of Gladstone shine out in their faces, so that in many cases you feel that till you have seen the likeness you hardly knew the man. A visit to the National Portrait Gallery at the end of the term's course is very pleasant, both to teachers and pupils, and helps to impress on them the added delight that knowledge gives to all we see. It is in studying the characters of the great men of the past that we can learn to be great men ourselves, and there is no study which gives more opportunity for leading the child to love whatever is noble and lofty, and to shun what is mean, ignoble and false.

But after all it is little that we teachers can do if we are

not backed up by home influence. If the talk at the breakfast table is about personalities and fashions, Mrs. Jones and her cook, Mrs. Smith's new bonnet, the thoughts of the children will be trifling as well. I owe my own love of History to my father's stories about the politics of his early manhood, the Reform Struggle, the trial of Queen Caroline, the Catholic Emancipation. I well remember the February evening fifty years ago this very month, when he told us that the throne on the Continent that had yesterday seemed strongest had fallen in a day. From that time I date my own keen interest in contemporary history. My father was always striving to interest us in politics, or history, or literature, and deep is our feeling of gratitude to him for it to-day. May your children in time to come look with similar feelings of gratitude upon your endeavours to guide them to higher things. After all there is no pleasure so enduring as that derived from books. Cricket and football, dancing and tennis, do not outlast our youth. Even music loses its charm as the emotions become less acute, even intercourse with friends is liable to be stopped by death, even the beauties of nature require the vigour for walking or riding, but the love of books will endure as long as the intellect, and no kind of reading is so inexhaustible in its freshness as Biography and History. Let us then keep this as our great aim, to make the pupil love the subject and desire to read more about it. If we succeed in that we shall have added a permanent joy to his life.